



# NEWS RELEASE

## OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

**For Immediate Release:**

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December 14, 2018

### **Virginia Man Sentenced to 30 Years in Prison for Sexually Abusing 13-Year-Old Boy**

A 33-year-old Virginia man pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 30 years in prison for sexually abusing a 13-year-old boy. Joseph Coffinberger, of the 2000 block of Royal Fern Court in Reston, pleaded guilty to one count of sex abuse of a minor— continuing course of conduct, and one count of sexual solicitation of a minor before retired Howard County Circuit Court Judge Lenore R. Gelfman this morning.

Assistant State's Attorney Susan Weinstein told the court that on May 21 the boy told his mother that he was in a sexual relationship with an older man from Reston, Virginia. She contacted police and her son told detectives that he and Coffinberger met online in 2017 when he was 12 years old and Coffinberger was 32. In January, Coffinberger began driving to Ellicott City where he and the boy began a sexual relationship that took place in the man's car and at nearby motels. Through their investigation, detectives corroborated the victim's statement using cell phone records and text messages, motel receipts, photographs, and text messages exchanged between Coffinberger and a detective posing as the boy. Weinstein characterized Coffinberger as "extremely manipulative" in his relationship with the 8<sup>th</sup> grader.

The victim faced his assailant and gave a remarkable victim impact statement detailing the emotional torment and harm he and his family experienced. He revealed that when he told his father, who lived out-of-state, his father "couldn't handle it." His father died, in August. Striking a note of hope, the victim said, "Last night I finally realized I was going to be okay...I've waited so long to start healing and I am going to start today."

Coffinberger addressed his victim in a brief statement. "I'm sorry; my intentions were to never harm you," he said. Judge Gelfman then pronounced a 30-year sentence for sexual abuse of a minor— continuing course of conduct, and a fully-suspended, 10-year consecutive sentence for sexual solicitation of a minor. Upon eventual release, she placed Coffinberger on five years of supervised probation, ordered that he have no contact with the victim, to register as a Tier III sex offender and to submit to evaluation and mental health treatment and sex offender treatment.

Earlier this month, a Baltimore County grand jury handed up a 21-count indictment charging Coffinberger with sexually abusing the same boy at a Catonsville motel.

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